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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/691,960	10/24/2003	Nobuo Matsuyama	031251	6978

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EXAMINER

VANAMAN, FRANK BENNETT

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3618

DATE MAILED: 03/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/691,960

Applicant(s)

MATSUYAMA, NOBUO

Examiner

Frank Vanaman

Art Unit

3618

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on Jan. 19, 2006 has been entered.

Status of Application

2. Claims 2-6 are pending, claim 1 having been canceled, claim 6 having been added.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 6 is objected to for the following informality: In claim 6, line 5, there appears to be a word missing between "propel" and "hydraulically-driven".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

5. Claims 6 (independent), 2, 3, and 5 (as dependent upon 6, 2, and 3) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bohrer (US 2002/0121399, published 5 September 2002, filed 21 February 2002). Bohrer teaches a hydraulically driven vehicle having a motor (16) driven by pressure oil from a pump (14) for driving the vehicle, wherein a maximum output set by a maximum angle of tilt of a swashplate of the pump or motor (see page 2, paragraph 0021, lines 7-9) may be changed (paragraph 0023) by an electronic control (22) under the effect of a selecting means (36), and further teaches that a maximum output may be set by a control (paragraph 0024, lines 3-7) in the form of a switch or potentiometer, and which may be manipulated by a service person operating that control (and performing as an operator to the breadth claimed), and

wherein the result of the operation of the control is manifested in the operation of the vehicle under operational (i.e., working) conditions, and wherein efficient operation may be defined as operation of the vehicle not exceeding a maximum speed or output.

As more particularly regards the recitation of 'efficient performance', please note that a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In a claim drawn to a process of making, the intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
7. Claims 4 and 5 (as dependent upon claim 4) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohrer (cited above). Bohrer teaches a hydraulically driven vehicle having a motor driven by pressure oil from a pump or driving the vehicle, wherein a maximum output set by a maximum angle of tilt of a swashplate of the pump or motor may be changed by an electronic control under the effect of a selecting means, and further teaches that a maximum output may be set by a control. Bohrer fails to teach the minimum tilt angle being adjustable. It is well known to adjust a lower end of a drive range to allow either a creep speed or to overcome internal friction in a drive train, and as such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide an adjustment for a minimum tilt angle so as to allow, for example, the setting of a creep speed or to provide a setting which overcomes internal friction in the drive train.

Response to Comments

8. Applicant's comments, filed with the amendment, have been carefully considered. Applicant has argued that the reference to Bohrer "does not perform any function when the gears of the gear box are in any of the lower gears". The examiner agrees, however there is nothing at all recited in the claims which requires this condition.

Applicant is explicitly invited to point out the precise location in the claims as currently recited (based on the presumption that applicant's arguments are directed to the claims as they are currently pending), where the distinction applicant has argued actually appears. The examiner notes with some surprise that it appears as though applicant is again promoting non-recited limitations as defining beyond the prior art.

Note that while the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir.1993).

As applicant is aware, this specific issue having been explicitly pointed out by the examiner in the previous office action, during patent examination, the pending claims must be given their broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification. *In re Hyatt*, 211 F.3d 1367, 1372, 54 USPQ2d 1664, 1667 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Applicant always has the opportunity to amend the claims during prosecution, and broad interpretation by the examiner reduces the possibility that the claim, once issued, will be interpreted more broadly than is justified. *In re Prater*, 415 F.2d 1393, 1404-05, 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969) The court explained that "reading a claim in light of the specification, to thereby interpret limitations explicitly recited in the claim, is a quite different thing from 'reading limitations of the specification into a claim,' to thereby narrow the scope of the claim by implicitly adding disclosed limitations which have no express basis in the claim." The court found that applicant was advocating the latter, i.e., the impermissible importation of subject matter from the specification into the claim.). See also *In re Morris*, 127 F.3d 1048, 1054-55, 44 USPQ2d 1023, 1027-28 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

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Conclusion

9. Any inquiry specifically concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to F. Vanaman whose telephone number is 571-272-6701.

Any inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application may be made through either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A response to this action should be mailed to:

Mail Stop _____
Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450,

Or faxed to:

PTO Central Fax: 571-273-8300

F. VANAMAN
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3618



Handwritten signature of F. Vanaman, dated 3/6/08.